

The Johns Hopkins Center for  
Excellence in Community  
Environmental Public Health  
Practice

# The Many Faces of Maryland



# *The Profile of Maryland Environmental Public Health Practice* Report

- Site visits to Maryland's 24 EPH departments
- Creation and distribution of an IRB-approved assessment tool to each EH department
  - 92% response rate
- Presentation of *Profile* results to state and local Environmental Health Directors and Health Officers for feedback

# Challenges

- Limited IT workforce, sustainability of technologies
- Increased demand for EH services as a result of growth and development
- Limited resources due to tight budgets and capped fees
- Difficulty with retention and recruitment of staff due to low salaries and few promotional opportunities
- Uncertainty given impending retirements of EH directors and staff with extensive historical knowledge and experience
- Limited access, funds, and time for training in a variety of emerging fields such as IAQ and arsenic in groundwater
- Strained/unclear lines of communication between federal, state, and local agencies

# Successes

- Hardworking and dedicated environmental health staff
- Responsiveness to increasing community needs
- Creative/efficient use of resources with limited funding
- Innovative programs such as alternative well and septic, land application of sludge, GIS and mapping, lead risk assessment, IAQ, and other research projects
- Inter-county and inter-agency communication and coordination at the local level on preparedness/readiness issues
- Planning and management of Hurricane Isabel

# Data analysis for *Profile Report*

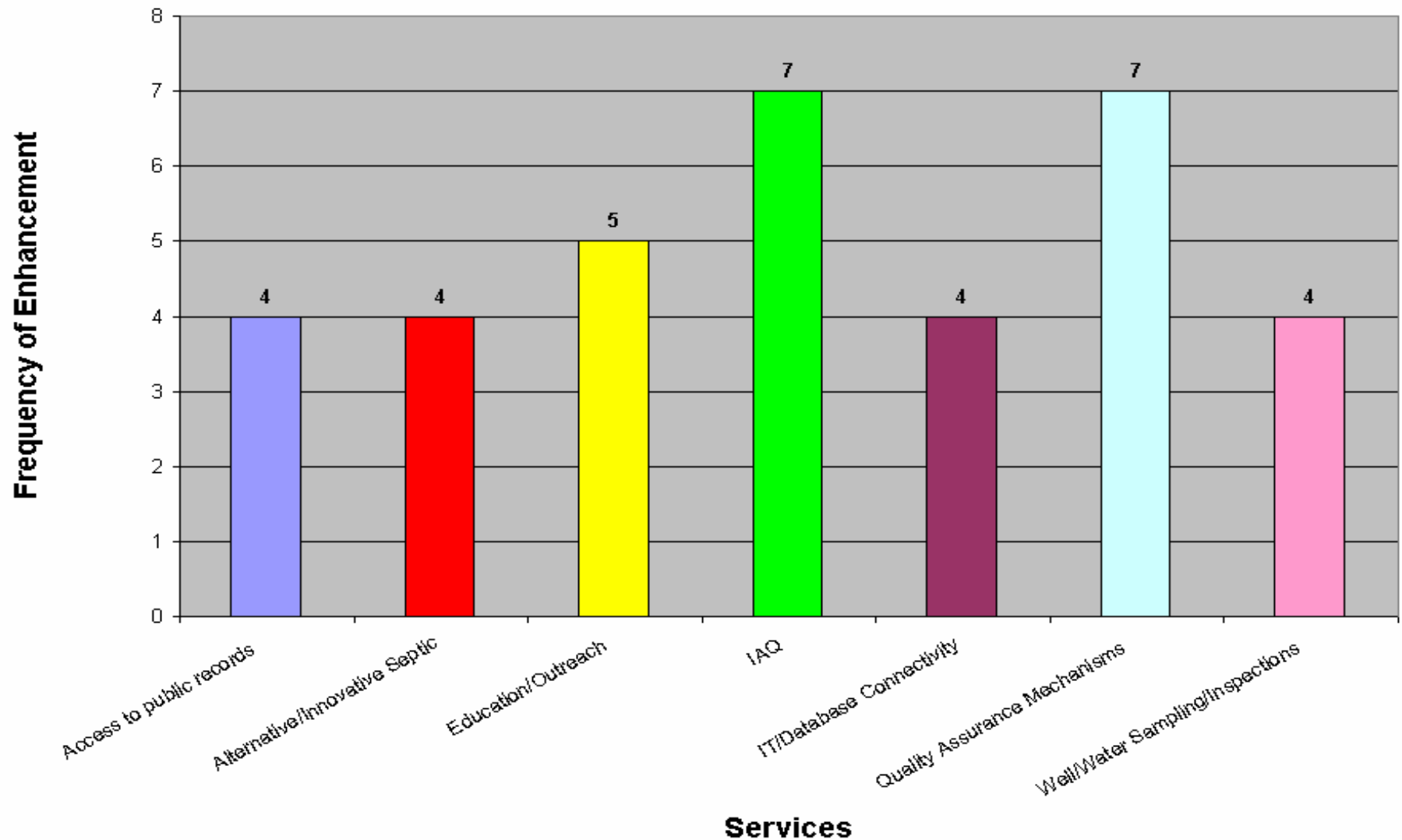
- Trends analyses
- Statistical analyses of EPH services data
- Evaluation and recommendations based on emerging issues, training needs, and other topics
- Budget information

# Samples of Maryland Statistics

In 2003:

- An average of **\$5.72** is spent **per person** for environmental public health services, as compared to an average of **\$62.36** spent **per person** on all health department services in the state of Maryland.
- On average, there was one Registered Sanitarian (RS) per 13,500 residents.
- A total of 35,527 staff-hours were spent on permanent food facility permitting activities.
- On average, one RS handled 110 nuisance complaints.
- A total of 206,182 staff-hours were spent on nuisance complaint management.

# Recommendations for Service Enhancement

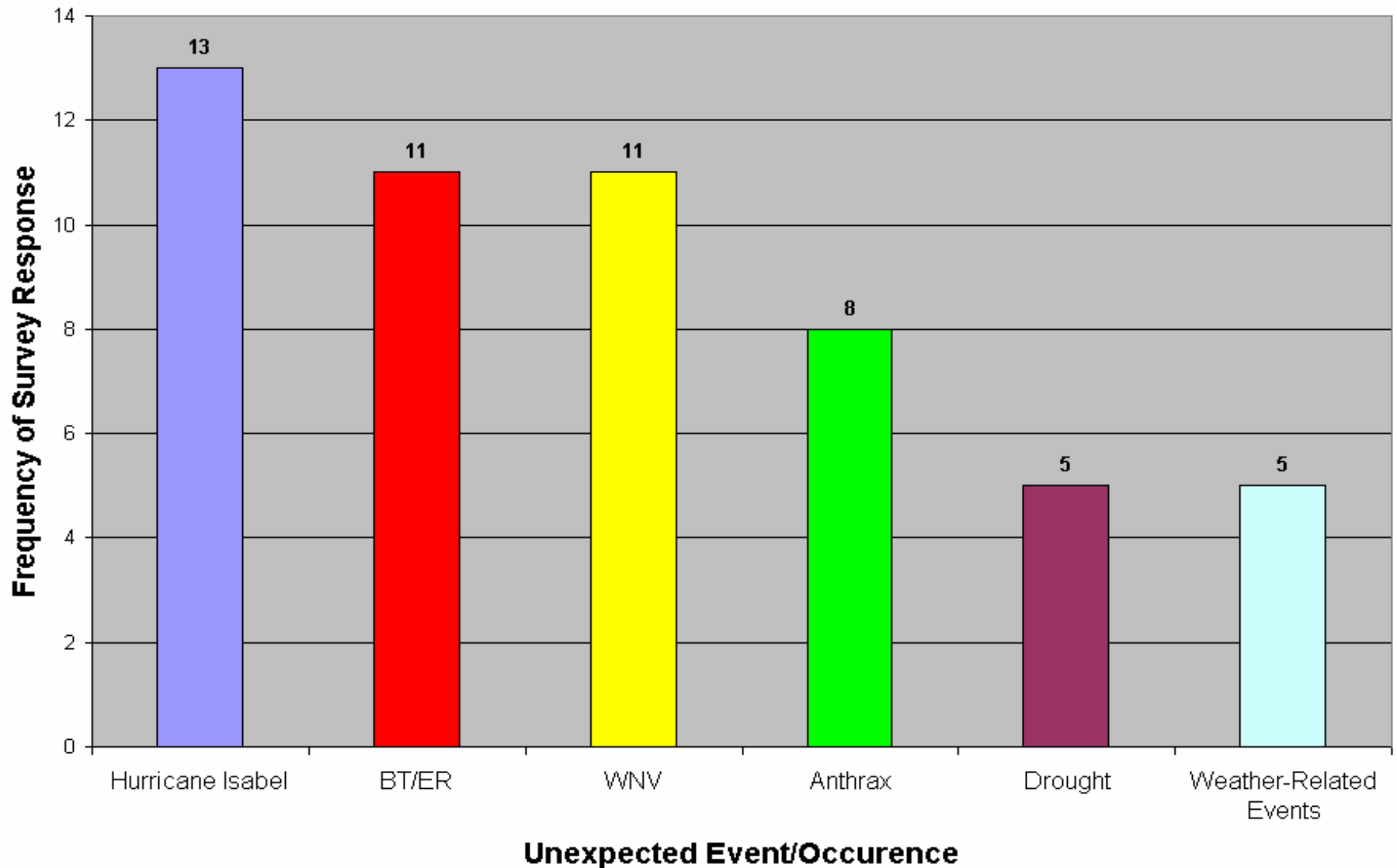




# Services Eliminated Over the Last Five Years

- Most frequently cited eliminated services were preventive in nature:
  - Water and septic evaluations and inspections
  - Lead inspection and remediation
  - Air and water quality testing and inspections
  - Real estate related services

# Unexpected Events/Occurrences Over the Past Two Years





Residents of Annapolis, Maryland kayak through downtown  
as a result of Hurricane Isabel

# Costs of Unexpected Events/Occurrences

- In the last two years, unexpected events and occurrences in Maryland cost EPH departments:
  - \$871,000
  - 18,400 man hours

# Staff Departures Over the Last 5 Years

- Other Counties (20%)
  - Anecdotal evidence indicates that staff departures resulted in loss of personnel to higher-paying or more geographically desirable counties (often in the Central and Capital Regions).
- State (15%)
  - Discussions during site visits indicated that greater opportunities for career advancement are available at the State level.
- Private (22%)
  - Higher salaries in the private sector were found to be responsible for a large percentage of staff departures.
- Retired (22%)
  - Impending retirements of experienced EH staff poses a significant concern for furthering EH workforce pipeline.

# What Type of Expertise Would You Add to Your Staff?

